Dear Jim, Spectro, Church Committee, Kennedys 4/6/75

Because some U of Md kids are due here this morning, it will be possible to get this into the mail and you may have it tomorrow, with the saving of phone time. It has been a bit chaotic and I've not have a chance for much thinking with Ernie Ehan here, the heavy windstorm and what it has required and promises I'd made earlier to make local speeches. Poor Mr. Maio's troubles took yesterday afternoon. In the morning, as soon as it was light enough, I had to removed the larg pine at the end of the driveway from the driveway it blocked. I got all but the branches sawed up and today I'll have to remove the entire mess. Even the phone has conspired, with a crazy Detroit radio station waking me at 2 a.m. this morning, when I'd been in bed but an hour, to confirm I'm doing a show for them at 1 tomorrow a.m.! A 2 a.m.!!! When I'd "confirmed" say before yesterday when the producer phoned me!

On Spectro, I think you are insisting on the right things. I also think it is right to keep the pressure on them now that they have made the kinds of mistakes I'd expected when I asked you to ask them to permit taping of the conference by both sides.

They are more vulnerable on Spectro than any other possible case of the moment if not of all, and not only because of the legislative history of the amendments. It is, as you've seen, the one bit of evidence FBI does not dare have fully aired because they had to do a fake inqyiry and they can't blame their faking on anyone else. Hoover could and did do no more than pass the buck to the Commission. He could not dump his failure to do what the test requires on them. Nor can any of the lab agents. This, not policy, is the reason they masked the distribution. It establishes guilty knowledge. However, it is also a case in which there is no Commission or staff innocence, if you recall the questioning of Frazier.

It doesn't make that much difference if they now withhold the rest and say take it to court. The worst we could expect is that a judge would agree that they do not have to disclose the initial denoting distribution. The airing of the whole thing would be worth more than that, as I think they'll agree. And the fact that they did not do a complete spectro will be a cort record.

However, the makes more important what I've long wanted, a page or pages from a standard text on what a spectro is. I think you can now better understand why I wanted to attach it to the complaint. Multiple reasons.

When it is all over we then complain about the charges, based on Williams' affidavit. (I don't know if you want Mich to know you sent me his Navy correspondence. If you do or do not, I suggest you suggest to him that the Navy has no right to assess all those search charges because theyx are supposed to have collected all that information for the Commission. This means that the charges are not justified or they did not fully inform the Commission or the higher-ups in the Navy, he should say, and give them the chance to drop the charges or admit they did not do as they should at the time of the investigation.) We ought at the beginning make a record of the nature of the charges the government is making because for the average person these charges alone can defeat the purposes of the Congress in enacting the law.

I was pleasantly surprised at Tom Susman's call. When he apologized for not responding to my letters I reminded him that I'd told him I expected no responses and had told him I expected a one-way correspondence whose purpose was merely to inform or prepare him. He recalled this but added that he appreciated being kept informed, had read and understood and appreciated what I'd told him, and I gather he was also saying he not passed on what he believed he should have. The if not one of the purposes reflects another aspect of this and we discussed several aspects in some detail. Obviously he is not irresponsible or a self-starter, so I assume his conversation with Mike Epstein has more than the ordinary meaning one might attribute to his having had that conversation. I take it also that EMK has considerable input into that committee.

When I saw Tom I was pretty diraightforward. One could say blunt. I told him that I felt it was necessary for him to understand the consequences of misplaced trust of the past and as it continued into the present. I could not have been more uninhibited about Marshall, Sheridan and other related matters. He did not resent it them, under-

stood fully what I was telling him and why, and had a clear recall when he spoke to me yesterday. H went out of his way to let me know, for example, that Sheridan was still working for them. He knew immediately what I was talking about when I said there might be some problems for Epstein in seeing me but none for me in seeing him. He in fact seems to have anticipated that I'd say something like this because he began by describing Epstein as an "absolutely straight arrow" in whom he and EMK have the fullest confidence. (The problem is Hoffa/La. and Partin. Epstein was in chargeof that DJ task force and the nefarious deal pardoning Partin for all those serious sins had to have been either his or with his approval at the lower levels. And you know well enough the complications Partin can mean now.)

When he asked me to phone Epstein I said I'd be glad to but couldn't pay for it. He suggested that I place the initial call and Epstein could call me back. At this point I suggested that you call Epstein initially because you are a lawyer and because you represent me and because you can add to what Epstein might want to know. (More than by your own knowledge, by the way.) He agreed and he said the question was a delicate one because it should not look like Epstein took the initiative or was soliciting. I suggest you keep this very clearly and always in mind because it is normal for the staff of committees to solicit information or help. It is their job. Therefore we have to conclude that there is a delicate situation and whether or not we know its exact nature, never forget it.

I discussed with him, taking the initiative, the problems of the Church committee in the assassinations area and especially those created by the irresponsible charges that are attracting attention and are conducive to a whitewash. I said that in my view the only safe way to handle this is to examine into the way the agencies worked, their records, what they did and did not do and how, etc. He seems to agree. I told him also that if he had not caught the shows he should know that in each and every one I'd seen there was a clear allegation of Kennedy responsibility for the suppressions, ranging up to three on the first ABC show. I went from this into an explanation of the Memo suit and the actualities. he remembered pretty much of what I'd written him about it and made no effort to discourage me. He also seemed to understand the legalities as I saw them as well as the relevant factual actualities.

It was after all of this that he said they are looking into how the agencies are complying this month and in the sense of they would want to know from me what my experience has been. here I again brought you in, so you may be hearing from him on that, too.

It makes no difference to me what Hood's hangups on me are and I don't care whether he persists in them or not. I can't keep up without anything without addressing them anyway. However, because he has made reference to them again, I think it might be useful to give him some kind of assurances along several lines.

First that the arrangements I have made for the use of the transcript are as good as we can expect and that the very majorest of the media are considering. And that it does not end here. (I hope you had time to write Church along the lines I suggested. With Susman's endorsement the concluding parts have more point but if you have not they also are less needed now.)

I would tell him also that there are other efforts with other materieals I am making, and include generalities about spectro, that you consider are the right ones and the right way.

I do not have in mind saying look, you have all these silly notions.... Rather do I think a simple, straightforward report of the situation can be helpful. There may come a time when I may want to invite him in with the Church committee.

His not doing anything as he tried without success with the 1/27 transcript indicates he had learned what he has not admitted anyway. Let us keep it cool.

I plan no further immediate initiatives with the media. Let things go or not go as they will and we can yet direct. This has been a big plus in the backgrounding it it has made possible if in no other way. I can visualize others. I have heard nothing more from any.

With Epstein, I think it would be best we you and he to come here together, but if he doesn't wat to, I'll go in. Best,